

U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission: May Newsletter on Upcoming and Recent BPC Events

BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

May 3, 2012

Featured Successes

Chicago Symphony Orchestra Delivers Highlight U.S.-Russia Cultural Event

As the highlight of the yearlong “American Seasons” cultural program, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) conducted performances in Moscow and St. Petersburg, April 18-21. The concerts received acclaim from both attendees and media outlets. CSO musicians also conducted master classes with students in both cities and students from the Moscow Conservatory were able to attend an open rehearsal, where Maestro Riccardo Muti offered advice to students studying conducting. Through the CSO’s Citizen Musician program, the Embassy offered concerts at a rehabilitation clinic in Moscow for students with disabilities and their families and at a St. Petersburg orphanage. Several corporations joined the U.S. government in sponsoring the tour through public-private partnerships. Under the leadership of Maestro Muti, the CSO is consistently hailed as one of today’s leading orchestras. *(Culture Sub-Working Group)*



Maestro Muti and the CSO perform at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. (Photo: Chicago Symphony Orchestra)

U.S. Department of Commerce Leads an Automotive Trade Mission to Russia

U.S. Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Michelle O’Neill led a delegation of 12 American companies on an automotive parts and components trade mission to Russia, April 22-28. Representatives from U.S. auto parts manufacturers visited Moscow, Samara, and St. Petersburg. Participating firms gained market insights, made industry contacts, solidified business strategies, and advanced specific projects with the goal of increasing U.S. exports to Russia. The mission included more than 100 one-on-one business appointments with potential buyers, agents, distributors, and joint

venture partners; meetings with regional government officials; and networking events. (*Business Development and Economic Relations WG*)

- ▶ Read more about the trade mission's success in [this press release](#).
- ▶ Read DUS Michelle O'Neill's [pre-trip article](#) in *The Moscow Times*.



Trade Mission participant Lynne Branigan of Warren Distribution with DUS O'Neill and U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul.
(Photo: U.S. Embassy Moscow)

CDC and Rospotrebnadzor Sign Protocol Outlining Areas of New Cooperation



Dr. Frieden and Dr. Onishchenko sign the Protocol of Intent. (Photo: U.S. Department of State)

On April 24, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Dr. Thomas Frieden and Dr. Gennady Onishchenko, Head of the Russian Federal Service for Surveillance of Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-Being (Rospotrebnadzor), signed a Protocol of Intent in Washington, D.C. Under the Protocol, the partners will collaborate on the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases. During their meeting, U.S. and Russian officials discussed bilateral cooperation and public health challenges, especially combating tobacco use. In addition, they touched on topics of global health, including the push to eradicate polio globally and the development of targets for addressing non-communicable diseases, both of which will be on the agenda for the 2012 World

Health Assembly. Dr. Onishchenko also traveled to CDC in Atlanta to discuss specific collaborative work under the Protocol with CDC experts and to visit the CDC's Emergency Operations Center. (*Health WG*)

Culture and Education

A Cappella Group Delights through Gospel and Motown Music

As part of “American Seasons,” the Northern Kentucky Brotherhood a cappella quintet sang to a full house at the St. Petersburg Jazz Philharmonic Hall on April 12. With their soaring gospel tunes and renditions of Motown favorites, they brought young and old to their feet. The audience received a double treat, since world renowned ballet dancer, choreographer, and founder of the Dance Theater of Harlem Arthur Mitchell also attended the concert. Mitchell danced in Leningrad in 1962, and ballet aficionados in St. Petersburg still pay him homage for his dancing grace, athleticism, and technical prowess. While in Russia, the Northern Kentucky Brotherhood also performed in Kaliningrad, Kirov, and Nizhny Novgorod. (*Culture Sub-Working Group*)



Members of the Northern Kentucky Brotherhood.
(Photo: U.S. Consulate General St. Petersburg)

ECSM Working Group Co-Chairs Hold Initial Meeting in Washington

On April 6, Under Secretary Tara Sonenshine welcomed Special Presidential Representative Mikhail Shvydkoy at the State Department to discuss future plans for collaboration in the areas of education, culture, media, and sports exchanges. The two senior officials jointly chair the U.S.-Russia Presidential Commission's Education, Culture, Sports, and Media (ECSM) Working Group. Over the past three years, more than 100 different groups of American musicians, dancers, artists, and writers have introduced Russians to the depth and diversity of U.S. culture as part of the “American Seasons” in Russia program. U.S. audiences similarly enjoyed the rich heritage of Russian culture through performances and artistic events in the United States. In the coming months, the ECSM Working Group looks forward to working in partnership to increase opportunities for educational exchanges, and holding the next Media Sub-Working Group event in October 2012 in Washington, D.C. To that end, Mikhail Gusman, First Deputy-Director General of ITAR-TASS, also met with Under Secretary Sonenshine on April 30 as well as with Dawn McCall, his counterpart Media Sub-Working Group Co-Chair. (*ECSM WG*)

► Read the [full press release](#) on the April 6 Sonenshine-Shvydkoy meeting.

Collaboration between U.S. and Russian Community Colleges Continues

Five senior U.S. community college officials visited higher education institutions throughout Russia as part of the Fulbright Community College Administrators Program, April 4-18. They met with Russian counterparts at institutions throughout southwestern Russia to discuss the U.S. community college model and its role in providing access to higher education, workforce training, and professional development. They also identified several opportunities for long-term, collaborative research projects and partnerships with Russian institutions. In the United States, and via the International Visitor Leadership Program, two groups of Russian academics and administrators (one representing research universities and the other vocational schools) are visiting multiple cities to meet U.S. counterparts and learn more about higher education, innovation, industry-university partnerships, and work force development in the U.S. context. (*Education Sub-Working Group*)



Program participants meet with Victor Demin, director of Krasnogorsk State College and president of the Union of Directors of Professional Colleges in Russia. (Photo: U.S. Department of State)

U.S. Dancers Separate Art from Entertainment in Russian Far East

On April 23, Charles Slender and his dance company FACT/SF put on a thought-provoking contemporary dance performance in Vladivostok's Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall. This performance launched the Trans-Siberian tour of the U.S. dance company, a part of "American Seasons." The highlight of the evening was a piece that Charles Slender choreographed for locally-based dance company Kauri. "This was the craziest work I ever took part in and I loved every second of it," stated one of the Russian dancers. Slender explained to local journalists that the main point of his work is to distinguish art from entertainment. (*Culture Sub-Working Group*)

The Carlos Nakai Jazz Trio's Performances Wow Russian Crowds

U.S. musician R. Carlos Nakai and his Jazz Trio travelled to St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Yaroslavl, and Moscow as part of "American Seasons," April 22-28. In St. Petersburg's Jazz Philharmonia, the audience presented Nakai with a small Russian whistle to add to his extensive collection. Nakai noted he will use his new tangible musical link to Russia in future performances. The guitar player offered a demonstration of the musical possibilities offered by the self-built combination guitar/lute/lyre/synthesizer, and the drummer captured everyone's imagination with a ceramic "drum" that originated in Africa but which has been adapted for the American southwest. These performances

closed out the successful “American Seasons”-Library of Congress series on traditional American folk life that included gospel, bluegrass, Zydeco, and Cajun music. (*Culture Sub-Working Group*)



Musician R. Carlos Nakai performs with his new whistle.
(Photo: U.S. Consulate Yekaterinburg)

► See more concert photos on [U.S. Consulate Yekaterinburg’s Facebook page](#).

Friendship Hockey Tournament Brings Together U.S. and Russian First Responders

With the support of the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM), the Russian-American Foundation and Moscow’s Hockey Club Legends continued their tradition of historic matches between the hockey teams of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), EMERCOM, the “Legends of Hockey,” “Grad Club,” and “NHL Veterans Club.” The teams battled it out on the ice April 27 through 29. Hockey legends Ron Dyugey, Mark Dzhanassens, Stephen Wicks, Alexander Yakushev, Yuri Lyapkin, Viktor Shalimov, and Vladimir Lutchenko participated.



Ambassador McFaul hosts the FDNY guests at Spaso House prior to the hockey games. (Photo: U.S. Embassy Moscow)

On the April 24, the FDNY visitors met with famous Russian sculptor Zurab Tsereteli, who created “The Tear Drop,” a monument in the United States in memory of the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks, and presented him with an honorary fire helmet. Before the games’ start, the New York firefighters and NHL players also attended a reception in their honor held by EMERCOM and toured the EMERCOM facilities. (*ECSM WG*)

Health, Sciences, and Environment

United States and Russia Look to Expand Global Malaria Control Cooperation

In March, the United States and Russia exchanged letters of intent to cooperate to help end preventable child deaths from malaria, reduce the burden of malaria during pregnancy, and strengthen global malaria control. In support of national malaria control plans under the global [Roll Back Malaria Partnership](#) (RBM), anticipated areas of joint collaboration include training and capacity building, evaluation, operational research, advocacy, and resource mobilization. The United States and Russia are also exploring joint participation or co-leadership in international and national forums such as the [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation](#) (APEC), the RBM, and regional or global health meetings. The first technical exchange took place in Moscow in April between the President's Malaria Initiative (United States) and Russia's Ministry of Health and Social Development working through the Martinovsky Institute of Medical Parasitology and Tropical Medicine. A bilateral protocol on malaria cooperation is currently under review with a possible signing at the RBM meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, in May. *(Health WG)*

Joint Aerial Survey of Ice Seals Begins

The United States and Russia kicked off a large-scale aerial survey effort to estimate the number of ice seals (ribbon, spotted, ringed, and bearded seals) in sea ice areas of the Bering Sea. This major bilateral collaborative research project started mid-April and will include flights of nearly 19,000 nautical miles over U.S. waters and 11,000 nautical miles over Russian waters. The survey lasts into May, and a second survey is planned during the same period in 2013. This effort, supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and several Russian institutions, constitutes the largest survey effort ever undertaken to estimate the abundance of these important seal species. *(Environment WG)*

► [Click here](#) for more about the ice seal survey.



A ribbon seal, one of the species being surveyed. (Photo credit: NOAA)

Health Conference Promotes Tobacco-Free Workplaces

[GBCHHealth](#) hosted a Tobacco-Free Workspace conference in Moscow on April 19. The meeting brought together representatives from the Ministry of Health and Social Development, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, industry from across the globe, and health-focused NGOs. Private-sector speakers shared their tobacco-free workplace policy implementation experiences, including the economic benefits resulting from such changes. Ministry representatives updated attendees on the status of draft tobacco control legislation, which is slated for Duma submission following Ministry of Justice review; the legislation is intended to bring Russia into World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control compliance. The outcome of the Conference was a draft resolution on supporting tobacco control legislation with a total smoking ban in enclosed public places and workplaces, which was supported by numerous industry leaders. In addition, Embassy representatives met with tobacco control advocates and discussed plans for possible future cooperation and advocacy through the Commission. (*Health WG*)

Workshop Focuses on Connection between Black Carbon and Agricultural Burning

At a March 28-29 workshop in Pushkino, Russia, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and the Russian Engineering Academy of Management and Agrobusiness convened Russian and U.S. scientists, Russian government officials, and agribusiness and NGO representatives to address the problem of Black Carbon deposition in the Arctic as a consequence of agricultural burning in Russia. This workshop was a component of USDA's Black Carbon Initiative project, which is supported through an agreement between the Department of State and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and jointly implemented by three USDA agencies: the Agricultural Research Service, USFS, and FAS. It was also part of a larger, multilateral and multiagency U.S. government program to reduce climate impact in the Arctic from Black Carbon emissions.



Sofya Solvyeva, from Moscow State University and former USDA Scientific Exchange Scholar, presents at the Workshop.
(Photo credit: Embassy Moscow)

Workshop participants noted that agricultural burning in the higher latitudes of the northern hemisphere is a particularly egregious source of Black Carbon in the Arctic region. The participants reviewed scientific methods and findings during their search to better understand the amount of agricultural burning taking place, when and where most of the burning occurs, and the options most feasible for Russian farmers to burn differently, burn less, or not burn at all. Overall, the workshop was successful in raising awareness of agricultural burning and defining steps to minimize the Black Carbon impact on

the Arctic environment. As the Black Carbon Initiative continues through 2012, USDA will continue collaboration with Russian implementing partners to help advance the steps reduce Russia's agricultural Black Carbon emissions. (*Environment WG*)

Forestry Group Meets in United States

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), with support from USAID, hosted a high-level, six-person delegation from the Russian Federal Forestry Agency (RFFA), including its Deputy Head Alexander Panfilov. During the week of April 2, the group traveled to Washington, D.C. and Colorado to participate in a bilateral Forestry Working Group meeting. In Washington, the two sides signed the 2012-2013 cooperative work plan between RFFA, USFS, and USAID and held meetings between key counterparts on themes including illegal logging, climate change and forest health, fire management, and forest inventory and monitoring. In Colorado, the delegation visited forest stands affected by fire and mountain pine beetle, an air tanker base, and two [Firewise Communities](#), which provided a first-hand look at forest management in the United States, forest health issues, and community fire prevention efforts. (*Environment WG*)

Large Wildfires Management Study Tour

With USAID support, the USFS is hosting three specialists from the V.N. Sukachev Institute of Forest and Avialesookhrana in Krasnoyarsk, Russia from April 20 to May 5. This study tour provides the participants with additional perspective on the monitoring and management of large and catastrophic wildfires, determining the direction of further cooperation with the Sukachev Institute on fire-related issues, and allows the Russian delegation to examine U.S. systems for monitoring and managing wildfires. The Russian specialists are traveling to California, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, and Montana, where they will visit sites such as the Tahoe National Forest, National Interagency Fire Center, and the Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory to explore approaches to wildfire research and management. (*Environment WG*)

Commerce and Energy

U.S. Energy Delegation Explores U.S.-Russian Civil Nuclear Cooperation



The delegation visits a Russian nuclear facility.
(Photo: Department of Energy, Moscow)

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy Dr. Peter Lyons led a delegation from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and national laboratory personnel that visited several Russian nuclear facilities and research institutes, April 10-19. The visit was the second part of an exchange between DOE and the Russian State Corporation for Atomic Energy (Rosatom). In August 2011, Rosatom officials conducted a similar visit to several DOE facilities and universities in the United States. Through these visits, the two sides have identified many new areas that would complement and deepen existing cooperation. *(Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Security WG)*

► [Click here](#) to read more the DOE visit.

Business Development and Economic Relations WG Co-Coordinator Meet

Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Michelle O'Neill and Deputy Minister of Economic Development Aleksey Likhachev met on April 24 to further the agenda of the Commission's Business Development and Economic Relations Working Group. Likhachev, who recently became the Working Group's Russian co-coordinator, highlighted Russia's priorities for small and medium enterprise development and improving the Russian trade and investment climate. O'Neill supported those goals, noting several U.S. business development trade missions to Russia (in the automotive, energy efficiency, and healthcare sectors) focused on increasing U.S. exports and establishing greater business ties with Russia. Likhachev highlighted that the Russian government has numerous business missions planned for the United States focused on medical technology and pharmaceuticals, eco-tourism, and chemicals. *(Business Development and Economic Relations WG)*

USAID Visit on Energy Cooperation

On April 19, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator Jonathan Hale met with a representative of Skolkovo to discuss cooperation on a possible U.S.-Russian Science Prize. Hale also met with the Russian Ministry of Energy and the Russian Energy Agency to discuss new cooperation respectively on smart cities and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Vladivostok this coming September. He signed Protocols of Intent on cooperation in these areas with the Russian Energy Agency. *(Energy WG)*

Smart Grid Sister City Partnership Advances

Senior management officials from Belgorod's OAO MRSK Center (Interregional Grid Distribution Company-Center) visited San Diego to meet with their counterparts at San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E), April 10-12. Their trip advanced the Smart Grid City-to-City partnership between San Diego and Belgorod, ongoing since 2010.

Led by CEO Dmitry Gudzhoyan, the MRSK Center delegation observed SDG&E operations and projects, including the smart grid and electric vehicle development. The group also visited one of SDG&E's substations, and met with various high-tech partner companies, including CISCO, GE, Space Time, OSI Soft, and others. Because of MRSK Center's new innovation program, "Smart Grid-Smart City," Gudzhoyan took particular interest in "Smart Grid San Diego," an initiative recently launched by SDG&E with GE and Cleantech San Diego.



A scene from the recent MRSK visit.
(Photo credit: MRSK Center)

Concluding the visit, the two sides have initialed a protocol of intent outlining the following priority areas of cooperation: power distribution automation, exchanging best practices in business processes, and video surveillance and security. (*Energy WG*)

► [Click here](#) MRSK's press release on the visit.

Security

Latest Military-to-Military Plan Finalized

The Military Cooperation Work Plan was co-signed by General Nikolay Makarov, Chief of the General Staff, Russian Federation, on April 18 following its signing by U.S. counterpart General Martin Dempsey. The Work Plan events are geared toward the development of cooperation between the U.S. Armed Forces and the Russian Armed Forces. The 2012 Work Plan includes 110 events, such as exercises, senior leader visits, subject matter expert exchanges, and port visits. Although the final signatures were just recently affixed, the two Armed Forces have been implementing the Work Plan in good faith since the beginning of the year. (*Military Cooperation WG*)

Civil Society

Migration Seminar and Conference Takes Place in Moscow

On April 13, U.S. and Russian migration officials, NGO representatives, and journalists gathered at the Moscow Higher School of Economics to discuss the challenges and opportunities of migration. The seminar, attracting over 20 Russian journalists, focused on topics such as the ethics of covering migration and ethnic relations, the myths and realities of migration, and social justice. The conference was devoted to discussion of migration policy reform and migrant health care issues. Steve Bucher and Ekaterina Yegorova, the co-chairs of the Migration Sub-Working Group, also held a bilateral meeting to discuss the next steps of their group. (*Migration Sub-Working Group*)

► [Click here](#) for more event information.

► Visit the conference's page on [Facebook](#).



Sheila Gwaltney, U.S. Embassy, Ekaterina Yegorova, Federal Migration Service, Steve Bucher, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and Sergey Roshchin, Moscow Higher School of Economics, kick off the migration seminar. (Photo: U.S. Embassy Moscow)

Other Related Events

Northern Route Working Group Meeting Held in Tajikistan

The Russian Federal Drug Control Service (FSKN) and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) participated in case coordination meetings at the sixth Northern Route Working Group Meeting, hosted by the Tajik Drug Control Agency in Dushanbe, March 29-30. Participants included investigators from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and the United States. These investigator-level meetings are held in order to facilitate the exchange of information on drug trafficking organizations active along the “Northern Route” through Central Asia to Russia. This effort complements the work of the Department of State’s Central Asia Counternarcotics Initiative, which supports the DEA’s strategy in Central Asia as well as promotes regional cooperation to combat narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan through Central Asia to Russia and elsewhere.

U.S. Company Recognized for Corporate Excellence in Russia

On April 21, Johnson & Johnson (J&J) was honored as a finalist in the U.S. Secretary of State’s Award for Corporate Excellence. J&J, through numerous alliances with USAID, has made a strong and positive impact on the lives of people—especially mothers and children—both in Russia and worldwide. The certificate of recognition was presented to J&J by USAID Mission Director in Russia Charles North at the annual awards ceremony of the American Chamber of Commerce in Moscow.

Climate Change Seminar in Russian Far East

On April 6 in Vladivostok, more than 90 people attended a seminar organized by the World Wildlife Fund to assess new textbooks and other educational materials dealing with climate change. The seminar is one of a number of climate change awareness activities under USAID’s Adaptation and Low-Carbon Development in Key Russian Regions project. Participants in the seminar included high school teachers and instructors from schools and institutions in Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, and the Primorye region; also present were representatives of environmental local NGOs and wildlife refuges.

Calendar of BPC Upcoming Events

April 30-May 4: Media Sub-Working Group Co-Chair and ITAR-TASS Deputy Director-General Mikhail Gusman will travel to Washington, D.C. to interview U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, IRS Commissioner Douglas Shulman, and Mayor Vincent Gray as part of a BPC documentary project on U.S. democracy and government.

April 30-May 11: The U.S. Forest Service will host an eight-member Russian delegation led by the head of Russia's protected area system and including directors and staff of reserves and National Parks across Russia.

May 7: The show "Vek Amerikanskoi Musiki" will be broadcast on Russian Radio Orpheus.

May 13-June 1: The U.S. 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Carson, Colorado, will host an exercise with a delegation from the Russian Airborne Forces Command designed to build cooperation against a terrorist threat.

May 14-18: Former *Washington Post* Ombudsman Andy Alexander visits Vladivostok and Khabarovsk via a U.S. speaker program.

May 14-19: U.S. musician Herbie Hancock performs in Moscow, and then joins Dee Dee Bridgewater for a concert in St. Petersburg.

May 14-June 4: Baltimore's Center for International Theatre Development will host five Russian theater professionals for a four-city survey of theater culture in the United States.

May 16-19: Attorney General Eric Holder will attend the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum. He will also speak to the Law Faculty at St. Petersburg State University and hold a co-chairs' meeting of the Rule of Law Working Group.

May 22: Lar Lubovich and two dancers perform at Benois de la Danse in Moscow.

May 22: The Nicolai Fechin exhibit opens at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

May 23-25: Directors Kerlikowske and Ivanov will meet in St. Petersburg for the sixth meeting of the Counternarcotics Working Group. They will also observe activities and training at a counter-narcotics facility, including the graduation ceremony of international trainees.

May 26-June 3: U.S. university student body presidents will travel to Moscow, sponsored by the Youth Agency of the Russian Federation in coordination with the Center for American-Russian Engagement of Emerging Leaders.

May 28-June 1: Darci Vetter, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, will lead the U.S. delegation to the APEC Food Security Ministerial in Kazan, Russia. She will also have a meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture to discuss activities of Agriculture Working Group and bilateral trade issues.

May 29-June 16: Two U.S. Forest Service recreation specialists will travel to the Lake Baikal region to work with two protected areas and consult on recreation and interpretation programs and infrastructure being created there.

June 2-3: Steve Reilly and the Mamou Playboys will perform at Moscow's Usadba Jazz Festival and in Chelyabinsk.

June 4: The show "Vek Amerikanskoi Musiki" will be broadcast on Russian Radio Orpheus.

June 4-7: The U.S. Department of Commerce, together with the U.S. Department of Energy, is organizing an Energy Efficiency Trade Mission of 13 U.S. companies to Moscow and St. Petersburg, to be led by Under Secretary for International Trade Francisco Sanchez. The mission will offer participating companies individualized business appointments and meetings with national and regional government officials in Russia.

June 5: Monitor Group will host an Innovation for Excellence conference in Moscow for U.S. and Russian Innovation Working Group members, businesspeople, government representatives, and academics. Building on the Working Group's March 2012 launch, the conference will focus on innovation models, building innovation capabilities, measuring innovation programs, and facilitating government policy on innovation and clusters.

June 7: U.S. performer Savion Glover will play at Moscow's House of Music.

June 8-24: The "Developing New ESP Policy and Models for the Russian ELT Community" project will promote the creation of new English learning models for future engineers, scientists, and technical specialists throughout Russia, in line with the need to bring practical English skills to today's workplace.

June 7-19: Eight singers and three coaches from the Placido Domingo Center in Washington, D.C. will work with singers from the Vishnevskaya Opera Center and Bolshoi Opera in Moscow, and conclude their exchange visit with concerts there and in St. Petersburg.

June 14-21: The Mid-Atlantic – Russia Business Council (MARBC) is hosting the 16th Semi-Annual Russian-American Innovation Technology Week (RANIT-BIO) in Philadelphia and Boston. The event will bring together the U.S. and Russian technology communities to highlight innovations in biotechnology, the pharmaceutical industry, nanotechnology, and the life sciences. A representative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is scheduled to participate in the conference and speak about the Health Working Group as well as other areas of U.S.-Russia cooperation.

June 17-30: The Department of Commerce's Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) office will conduct the second phase of a Presidential Management Training Exchange Program in Yekaterinburg. In fall 2011, SABIT launched the Program by hosting two delegations of Russian information technology and energy efficiency professionals.

June 20-30: The U.S. Forest Service and National Fire Protection Association will host a study tour on wildfire prevention and community and local solutions.

June 21-23: U.S. Secretary of Commerce John Bryson will lead the U.S. delegation to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

June 25-27: The U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission meets in Anchorage, Alaska, where members will share scientific information to make progress on complementary harvest management plans.

June 30: Eli Yamin Blues Band performs at the Usadba Jazz Festival in St. Petersburg.

June 30-July 13: The “Between the Lines” Writing Program takes place at the University of Iowa.